Infinite Tai Chi at Worth Valley Primary School

Background:

Miss Emelia May

Instructor & founder of Wharfedale School of Taekwondo (ITF Style). Teacher of Infinite Tai chi, Chi Kung & Meditation. Head Coach at Quest Baildon (Olympic style Taekwondo). A background in various complimentary therapies that spans over 22 years.

Worth Valley Primary School, Ingrow. West Yorkshire has embraced Infinite Tai Chi……………..A Gift. The hidden treasure. A secret ingredient. The forgotten role of the internal aspect of a martial art.

Last October, I was asked if I’d go into school and spend the morning with various year groups teaching a taster of taekwondo, tai chi & meditation to each class. There was a great response from both teachers and students. It was obvious that the internal aspect of Infinite Tai Chi, Chi Kung and Meditation would be of huge benefit. At this point in time it is a missing area of school life/curriculum. Then, early this year Hannah Sadler contacted me to ask if I would go into the school one day a week to teach Infinite Tai Chi, Chi Kung and Meditation to various classes.

The children at Worth Valley Primary began practising in April this year and have continued through to the summer. One aim has been to help them gain the ability to balance their internal and external world. The focus of practise is to learn to harmonise their energies. They are now beginning to understand the meaning of inner stillness and what it is to stay centred. Being rooted like a tree, flexible like a willow and with the stillness of a mountain. Incorporating methods leading towards meditation with the idea of being still and quiet, in their own space and explaining the benefits.

Introducing pupils to Yin and Yang. To know when to be assertive and when to yield is powerful way to facilitate ‘self’ awareness and centredness. The Chi Kung exercises and the idea behind the slow movements of the Infinite Tai Chi form was an alien concept at first and quite a challenge for some whilst others were naturals.

The movements they’re shown help increase a sense of ‘self’ increases. Confidence, courage and fortitude appear. As the children learn this moving meditation, Infinite Tai Chi becomes an enhancer for their ability to do well in any given area. Emotions are centred and balanced, the mind still, calm and clear.

The deputy/acting head, teachers, pupils and I, are hoping I will return in September and that the newly appointed headteacher will agree in the importance of continuing the practise and advancements the children have made so far. To have continuation and work with the children as they make their way through the years and into year 6 to see the results, would be amazing!

I’m looking to go into other schools and share with their students the benefits of Infinite Tai Chi, Chi Kung and Meditation. Because the practices cultivate and move pure ‘chi’ (energy) to balance the demands of school life today, the ‘Chi’ is then able to ease out tension, allowing for a calmer mind and more peaceful way of being. Perfect for exam stress, be it SATS, GCSE’s or A levels. Teaching the children from reception and through primary years will help to instil a practise that can be utilised at these tense times and for the rest of their life. There are so many ways it could be utilised in schools.

Funding these activities can be difficult for schools. If you are a school who would also like to benefit from Infinite Tai Chi or are aware of ways to fund this project, please get in touch.

Infinite Tai Chi goes beyond words, deeper than the profound, unfathomable to the mind, and tangible through commitment. The practise has the potential to; increase physical health, aid confidence, focus the mind, and bring out the best self. These make for strong foundations and good life skills. As these qualities are expressed they are also carried on into day to day life, for the benefit for both ‘self’ and others too.,

First experienced as a wisp of something that captures the attention. The seeking self becomes inquisitive, intrigued and an inner journey begins…..

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I’ve thoroughly enjoyed introducing into primary school, what I feel is a ‘missing link’ in todays world. The ability to be still and ‘know thyself’ (Socrates). Quite amazing for the little ones to gain the value and wisdom at such a young age.

I’ve also had the pleasure of working in secondary school for a term and can clearly see that what I’m offering could have marked benefits for the next generation.

With 1 in 5 suffering with mental health issues and the pace and pressure of this modern-day society, I feel it’s time to re-evaluate and learn the art of balance. Internal harmony, external harmony and a more purposeful, fulfilling happy, healthy life.

By Emelia May